

For Immediate Release

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Washington, D.C.- On January 4, the U.S. Census Bureau began the largest civic outreach and awareness campaign in U.S. history to increase awareness and encourage participation in the nation's once-a-decade population count. As a part of this campaign, the Bureau launched the 2010 Census Portrait of America Road Tour, a cross-country interactive experience designed to educate and empower people to take part in the 2010 Census and motivate every American citizen to complete and mail back 10-question census forms when they arrive in mailboxes March 15-17.

"This initiative will give people in our local communities—and across America—a wonderful opportunity to learn about the upcoming census count," said Congressman Sires. "The census is not only fast, simple and safe, but many people don't realize that their response to the census directly impacts the federal funding and services that their communities and neighborhoods will receive."

During the next four months, the Road Tour will stop and exhibit at more than 800 events nationwide where people will be able learn about the census, how it affects their local communities and share personal stories and pictures about why the census is important to them at interactive kiosks and exhibits. This constantly changing "portrait of America" will be captured during all Road Tour events and will live online at www.2010census.gov. The Road Tour regional vehicles are equipped with GPS technology that allows visitors to track the tour online as it happens and through daily social media postings on Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, Flickr and YouTube.

The 2010 Census is a count of everyone living in the United States. By law, everyone in the United States, both citizens and noncitizens, must be counted every 10 years. Census data are used to determine the number of seats that each state holds in Congress and directly affect

how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to state and local governments. The 2010 Census is one of the shortest questionnaires in history and takes about 10 minutes to complete. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement.

“The framers of the Constitution believed firmly that a census was a necessary building block for a successful nation,” said Sires. “Today, the census still gives a voice to every person living in the United States and allows them to help the government to distribute resources to places that need it most.”

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